

Shake YOUR Mailbox before Winter



The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) regrets any damage to mailboxes and/or mailbox supports that occur as a result of road maintenance activities. KCRC will not assume responsibility for mailbox damage that may be caused by snow/ice that is being plowed from the roadway. *An owner must clearly demonstrate the damage was caused by direct contact* by road commission equipment to receive consideration of a claim settlement.

Statewide the County Road Association of Michigan and the United States Postal Service partner in “**Shake Your Mailbox Day**” which was held **Saturday, October 15, 2011**. Mailbox owners are encouraged to regularly inspect and perform routine maintenance on their mailbox. Mailboxes should withstand wet heavy snow and slush coming off from the snow plow. Visit our website for a Mailboxes and Support brochure.

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Managing Director's Message



12th Street – 2011 Project

The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) continued to have a busy construction season. We completed primary road projects including 12th Street, S Sprinkle Road, and 12th Street/Texas Drive/Milham Roundabout, in addition to our primary/local road preservation projects and routine maintenance operations. We appreciated the support of our Township partners on our local road improvements. All of these projects keep us on the road to continuous infrastructure improvement.

As Kalamazoo continues on a positive trend, we have also received a letter from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the 2010 Decennial Census Impact on Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF) Distributions. The letter describes the 2010 Census Impact on MTF. The new census figures will be utilized to distribute the payments scheduled for November 2011. The information presented took Calendar Year 2010 MTF Receipts and allocated based on 2000 Population, and the new 2010 Population to detail out the POTENTIAL increases that Act 51 agencies (County Road Commissions, Cities and Villages) may receive using the new census figures. Of course, the actual amount of distribution depends on the actual amount collected.

Using the *illustrative* amounts, KCRC is one of 15 that will see an increase, projected to be .49%. The range of increases affecting County Road Commissions is .12% to 1.30%. Using the Calendar Year 2010 MTF and the 2000 population compared to the 2010 population figures, KCRC *may* see an increase of \$61,800 in revenue. Keep in mind, that although the illustration is positive, the \$61,000+ does not pave a mile of road, nor chip seal more than 4 miles of roadway.

As we move into the New Year, we will be putting final touches to our design and planning of our 2012 construction season projects. We will use the new census figures in the Local Road Participation Fund program and our 2012 budgeted allocation of \$1,100,000 toward our local road improvements.

Our team continues to be dedicated to enhancing our road network and putting those limited MTF dollars to efficient use.

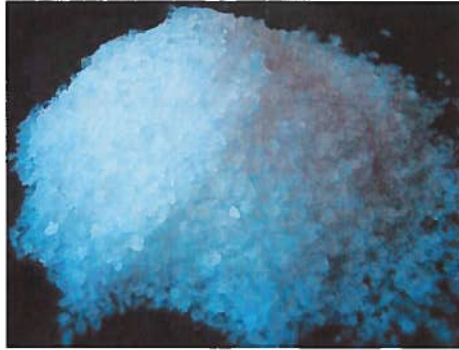
**Wishing you a safe holiday season and
all the BEST in the New Year.**

Sincerely,

Joanna I. Johnson,
Managing Director

WINTER MAINTENANCE

A Grain of Salt



SALT MYTHS

Few winter maintenance options have garnered as many negative rumors as the use of salt on roads. Here are a few myths that could be cleared up:

- *Salt causes potholes*—Potholes are caused by water entering the ground below the road surface and freezing. It is this freezing that causes the pavement heave and then to fail after it thaws.
- *Salt harms the environment*—While it is true that deicing salt can pollute if misused, studies at the University of Michigan showed that even heavy use of roadway salt flushes through waterways with little long-term impact. In fact, a 1993 study by the Michigan Department of Transportation determined that Sodium Chloride provided the best deicing qualities with minimal long-term economic and environmental impact.

Road agencies began using salt as a means for snow and ice control in the 1930s. Today it is an important and expensive component of winter maintenance. It provides safety and essential mobility for motorists, commercial vehicles, and police, fire, and other emergency vehicles. Without salt, ice will bond to the pavement. Once this bond is formed, ice cannot be removed without damaging the road surface or plowing equipment. As a result, salt is best applied early during a storm to prevent ice from bonding to the roadway and in strategic locations—hills, curves and intersections. Salt works by melting through the surface snow/ice to form brine. The remaining snow/ice breaks its bond with the road's surface and floats on top of this brine. Vehicular traffic breaks through the surface, reducing the snow/ice to plowable slush.

As the temperature decreases, salt begins to become less effective until around -6 degrees Fahrenheit where it becomes almost useless. At 30 degrees Fahrenheit, one pound of salt will melt about 46 pounds of ice. At 25 degrees, that same pound of salt can only melt about 14 pounds of ice. Various chemical additives can help improve the effectiveness of salt, but they come at a price.

Salt prices for KCRC are currently \$62.19/ton from \$41.25/ton in 2007. At a conservative rate (200 pounds / two lane miles) one ton only covers about 20 lane miles, and at heavier normal rates (up to 800 pounds / two lane miles) it only covers about 5 lane miles (two lane miles represents one mile of a two lane road). If we assumed that all 90,231 miles of county road in Michigan were only two-lanes (we know better), it would take more than 9,000 tons (at the 200 pounds rate) of salt at a cost of approximately \$559,710 to apply a single application of salt. Additionally, there are costs associated with the labor, fuel and equipment required to store and apply the salt.

As a result of falling revenues and increase material costs, KCRC has reduced salting operations as part of the winter maintenance program and focused on a salt/sand mix and use of deicing liquid pretreatment. In 2007 we used approximately 17,350 tons of salt at a cost of approximately \$735,000; in 2010 with specific targeted applications and mix we used approximately 5,250 tons of salt and spent approximately \$286,000. We targeted our salt usage and reduced use by approximately 12,100 tons which in turn reduced expenditures by approximately \$449,000 on salt alone, while maintaining safety during winter maintenance operations. All in all, winter maintenance operations cost the KCRC more than \$1,000,000 million per year.

In spite of concerns that the use of salt as a deicer causes environmental damage, several studies have found that the proper application of salt has little effect on the roadside environment and waterways. KCRC continuously reviews snow routes, application rates and service during winter maintenance to provide the most efficient, safest service along our roadways during winters in Michigan.

REMINDER:

MCL 257.677a prohibits pushing snow and ice onto, or across, roadways and requires that people do not obstruct the safety vision of motorists.



WINTER MAINTENANCE Service Delivery

As part of the KCRC's on-going winter maintenance assessment for the 2011-2012 winter seasons, we have identified a level of service adjustment to provide improved and advance coverage during peak travel and commute times. KCRC has incorporated a 3 shift program;

4:00p.m.

12:00a.m.

7:30a.m. (also available at 4:00 a.m. if necessary)

These changes incorporate our limited staffing and equipment for optimal coverage during winter storms. The priorities within these shifts will continue to be;

**Designated snow route roads,
balance of primary roads,
through local roads,
subdivision or plat streets,
and dead-end and cul-de-sac roads.**

One important fact has not changed, road crews must have ample room in order to safely clear the many miles of roadway of snow and ice. In collaboration with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM), the Kalamazoo County Road Commission announced their participation in an education campaign aimed at urging motorists to remember good driving habits in winter weather conditions, "Snowplows Need Room to Groom!"

MDOT, CRAM and the Kalamazoo CRC offer the following reminders for motorists:

- **Snowplows have limited visibility and drivers cannot see directly behind their trucks**
- **Snowplows often throw up snow clouds, reducing visibility on all sides of the truck**
- **To remain focused on driving, motorists should not text or talk on cell phones while they are behind the wheel**
- **Motorists should never attempt to pass a moving snowplow on the right. With new wing-plow technology the blade can clear the shoulder and the lane of travel simultaneously. Motorists attempting an illegal pass through a snow cloud on the right and/or shoulder of the road most likely won't see the plow blade and run the risk of a serious crash**
- **Always wear your safety belt and allow extra time to reach your destinations this winter.**

Remember – in Ice and Snow, Take it Slow!

Help us also educate the children on the risks presented by snowplows and the dangers of playing on the high piles of snow and ice that are near the roadway during snow removal –

- **Please KEEP THE CHILDREN AWAY from roadside piles of snow**
- **Don't build snow forts, make tunnels, or play in or on snow banks next to roads**
- **Keep away from the edge of the roadway as you wait for the school bus, get the mail, or watch the plow trucks**
- **Stay away from the end of a driveway when a snow plow is approaching**
- **Hidden objects under the snow, when thrown by the plow truck could cause serious injury**
- **Keep sleds and toys away from the roadways at all times**

Staff Highlights

General Superintendent: Travis Bartholomew

Citizens can call our office directly for routine service requests and/or your primary contact for service related issues by township is as follows:

- Jim Beaudoin, Area Superintendent
 - Alamo, Oshtemo, Prairie Ronde, Schoolcraft, Texas
- Bill DeYoung, Area Superintendent
 - Charleston, Comstock, Cooper, Richland, Ross
- Jeff Daughtry, Area Superintendent
 - Brady, Climax, Pavilion, Kalamazoo, Wakeshma



The goal of the Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County is using our expertise, energy and funds to provide the safest and most convenient road system possible, and to contribute to economic development and high quality of life throughout the county.

We are committed to providing a safe and convenient road system for our county motorists. As our customers and as residents of Kalamazoo County you are also entitled to excellent service from us at all times.

We aim to provide answers to your service requests. We encourage our residents and the motoring public to report road conditions that need attention. To make sure our service to you is prompt and courteous we strive to continually improve our methods of contact.

Office hours 7:30am – 4pm, Monday through Friday
269-381-3171 or
Call 911 for emergencies.

Visit our Website

- Board Meeting Information
- 2012 Budget
- 2012 – 2016 Primary Road Capital Improvement Plan
- Project Updates
- Brochures
- Permits
- Maps
- Purchasing

Subscribe to our news feeds for up to date information.

www.kalamazoocountyroads.com or email us at info@kerc-roads.com

Board of County Road Commissioners of Kalamazoo County

To better serve our County and local officials, each Road Commissioner has also been assigned as a liaison to various townships we serve as follows:

Kent L. McCauley – 2011 & 2012 Chairman;
Brady, Climax, Pavilion

Kenneth R. Oscarson – 2011 Vice Chairman;
Kalamazoo, Prairie Ronde, Wakeshma

Jeffrie M. Maddox – Comstock, Cooper, Ross

Dennis J. Berkebile – Charleston, Schoolcraft, Texas

Daniel J. Moyle – 2012 Vice Chairman;
Alamo, Oshtemo, Richland

Educational Opportunities

To provide educational opportunities for local officials we are planning the following presentations at KCRC at NO COST in 2011.

Rules of the Road – Presentation held August 10, 2011



Thank you to all the local officials for attending and to Sgt. Jim Campbell for an informative presentation.

Complete Streets held October 25, 2011 for transportation agencies. Special thanks to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Setting Realistic Speed Limits

Many of you have attending our educational session on setting speed limits. Now there is additional information available:

A YouTube video is now available that was produced by the Michigan State Police (MSP) and the MDOT titled “Do You Know How They Set Speed Limits?” There is also a link at the end of that video that will take you to the MSP website where there is additional information about establishing realistic speed limits.